

(Continued from page 11)

Zentsuji dated January 26, 1944, and received at Minneapolis, Minn., on August 4.

A letter received in Memphis, Tenn., in August from Zentsuji, said, in part: "Still well and in good spirits, so don't worry. Hope you are all well at home. By the way, Dad, I've learned to appreciate your 'bay window.' Here's to bigger and better ones."

"I am in fair health. I am still working here in Osaka along with some of my shipmates. Please do not worry. I do hope to hear from you," wrote a prisoner at Osaka to his mother in Geraldine, Montana. The card was received in August.

"I find my stay here very interesting and the time passes quickly. I hope all of you are in the best of health and prosperity. Say hello to everyone for me and be sure to include my new nephews and nieces—I should have some," wrote a marine corporal from Umeda Bunsho to his family in Wyatt, Indiana. Received in August.

An ensign held at Zentsuji wrote in April to his mother in Washington, D. C.: "Just yesterday I received a telegram from you, Mother, and also have received at least one letter dated every month from you. They are most enjoyable. Sorry to see that you have to print. Perhaps you could get your letters typed at the office. Still well and in good spirits, and still hoping to see you soon."

### European

A prisoner at Marlag Milag Nord wrote to his wife in New Britain, Conn., in June: "I've been getting quite a lot of letters lately, they are old but that doesn't make any difference. I've had about five hundred or more from you. I'm here sitting listening to some new records; they sure make me homesick. We're still having bad weather here, but nothing bothers me since the 6th! I hope it won't be much longer."

"I have received 12 cartons of cigarettes and one other parcel so far, and am looking for the other food parcels soon," a private at Stalag II B wrote his family in Wooster, Ohio, on May 28.

A letter received in the latter part of August by the brother of a prisoner at Luft III said, in part: "Life still drags on here. Our mail and parcels are about the only interruption to the monotony. We have camp entertainment in the form of shows and music, enacted by all of us. I even sang in one show; sang in a quartet. The YMCA and the Red Cross have sent in athletic equipment and musical instruments. We also received one Red Cross food parcel per man per week. Aside from the good work, thank my friends for writing, and explain to them why I can't answer. Every little article and letter has infinite value, since they are all we have to look forward to."

An Australian prisoner of war in Germany wrote on March 31 last to an official of the British Red Cross in London: "The American Red Cross has got magnificently organized, and provides each new prisoner as he goes through the transit camp with a complete new set of clothes, and, in fact, almost everything."

A sergeant at Stalag XVII B wrote to his family at Lewiston, Maine, on June 12 last: "We have volleyball and bridge to keep us occupied besides school subjects and baseball. Except for the fence and the guards, one might think it was an exclusive resort. Boys are all sunning themselves with few exceptions. There are all kinds of boys here, musicians, cooks, and many others who flew for Uncle Sam. Here, they all revert to their old professions to make life a little more pleasant and time pass a little faster. There are a swell bunch of boys here, and all seem to have the co-operative spirit. We chat and reminisce of good times in the past and ones to come soon we hope."

### PARCELS FOR GERMANY Prohibited Items

German postal regulations prohibit the inclusion of the following items in individual parcels addressed to prisoners of war:

Money of any kind; civilian clothing; underwear that could be made over into civilian clothing (special work clothing, sweaters, and athletic suits are permitted); weapons and weapon-like tools, including large pocket-knives and shears; munition and blasting materials; tools which could be used for escape purposes or sabotage; printing apparatus, charcoal, and tracing paper; compasses, maps, knapsacks, cameras and lenses; electric lamps, lighters of any kind and candles; alcoholic drinks, except wines; inflammable liquids, matches and fire hazards; telephones, radios, or parts thereof; chemicals, acids, and medicines; books, maps, newspapers, and printed matter; cigarette holders and papers; plain paper, notebooks and postcards; potatoes.

If any parcels contain prohibited articles, the regulations state, they will be confiscated, and only the permitted items will be delivered to the prisoner.

"I have been recalled to the Stalag, presuming that my 'Med.' proof has arrived from Washington," wrote a prisoner at Stalag II B to his family in New Jersey. He added: "After spending seven months on Kommando, it sure is good to have a rest. Time passes much slower when you're not working, but time won't stop, 'thank God.'"

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THE UNIVERSITY  
OF TEXAS

# PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN

Published by the American National Red Cross for the Relatives of American Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees

3, No. 1

WASHINGTON, D. C.

JANUARY 1945

## Moving Supplies to Prison Camps

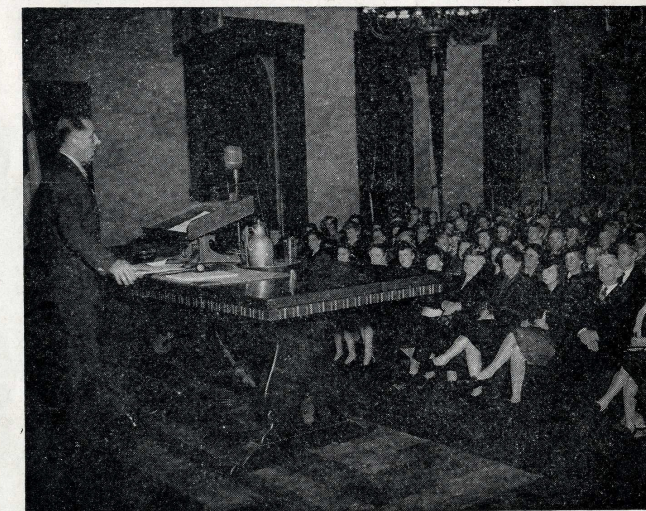
By Henry Wasmer

Wasmer is chief of the Relief Division of the International Committee of the Red Cross. He left Geneva on October 18 last for Berlin and Goteborg, and reached the United States in November, on the maiden voyage of the Swedish ship Salvo to discuss supply arrangements with officials of the American Red Cross. On December 11 he addressed a relief meeting in Washington, D. C., and returned to Europe later in the month. His was most timely and useful.—Ed.

Despite increasing difficulties imposed by the greatly intensified bombing of Germany and the heavy fighting now taking place on that country's borders, I can assure the relatives and friends of American prisoners of war that the food packages and other relief items sent by the American Red Cross are actually reaching the men in the camps. Only recently as last October, I saw supplies moving into German camps, and since then I have received reports by cable from Red Cross headquarters in Switzerland that relief goods are still moving regularly into Germany. Certain difficulties, however, are only to be expected in a country under continuous bombing from the air, and when primary targets are railroad junctions, bridges, marshaling yards, and rolling stock.

### International Committee of the Red Cross

Before I go into further detail, I would like to explain why it is really necessary to make Geneva, Switzerland, the clearing house and distributing center for prisoners of war relief. Although the name International Committee of the Red Cross implies an international institution, the Committee as such is Swiss. Its 20 to 25 members must be of Swiss nationality, but the Committee's activities are exclusively international. In peacetime, it performs the rather formal function of



Mr. Henry Wasmer, of the International Committee of the Red Cross, speaking in Washington, D. C., before 500 relatives of American prisoners of war. The meeting was arranged by the District of Columbia Chapter of the American Red Cross.

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or religion. May I just say a few words about Swiss neutrality? Neutrality is a fundamental pillar of our national life and existence. In this war as in the last, we have again and again declared our neutrality, and we are convinced that we have carried it out. Switzerland is one of the oldest democracies, and it is freedom and democracy for which we stand. Whatever an individual Swiss may think personally about belligerent nations is his own concern; but the government and the nation as such are neutral, and they try to help all suffering humanity regardless of political backgrounds.

The care which each country, through the International Committee of the Red Cross, can give to its prisoners of war naturally depends to a great extent on the country's resources, and, in the first instance, on that country's adherence to the Geneva Convention concerning the humane treatment of prisoners of war. During the present war, we have to care for some 2½ million prisoners of war scattered all over the world, and comprising over a dozen nationalities. This naturally requires a huge organization, with delegates and representatives in countries throughout the world. Only the citizens of a neutral nation can move freely from one belligerent country to another, and thus fulfill the high humanitarian purpose of the International Committee.

#### Financing Relief Operations

A question often asked is how such an organization as the International Committee of the Red Cross is financed, and where all the money required for its big task comes from. It is the Swiss government and the Swiss people who pay about one-half of the Committee's administrative expenditures. The remainder is covered by voluntary subsidies and contributions from the various national Red Cross societies or the governments of the belligerent nations.

The expenditures of the Relief Division, with which I am particularly concerned, are borne by the national Red Cross societies, and amount to about \$1,000,000 a year. This covers administration costs, wages for staff and labor, freight and transportation charges, warehousing, and so forth. These costs are charged pro rata among the national Red Cross societies, for whom we act as

trustees. As the American Red Cross is now the largest supplier of relief for American as well as for other United Nations prisoners, it is the American Red Cross which pays the biggest share—approximately 50 to 60 percent, with British Commonwealth Red Cross societies closely following, and with other Red Cross societies also contributing.

#### Relief Items to Prisoners

Having briefly explained the International Committee's setup, I will now go into some technical and practical details. The relief items which are sent to prisoners of war consist of food packages, cigarettes and tobacco, clothing (including underwear, shoes, uniforms, blankets, etc.), medical supplies and sanitary articles, personal comfort articles (such as soap, toothbrushes, shaving soap and equipment, etc.), sports articles and games, and, last but not least, books and educational materials. All these goods are consigned to the International Committee of the Red Cross by the national Red Cross societies or other welfare organizations in the belligerent countries.

To get these goods across oceans and through blockaded seas, it was necessary to create a special Red Cross fleet. We now have 12 ships (the fleet is being constantly enlarged) that carry the International Red Cross emblem and are manned by neutral crews. A conveying agent of the International Committee sails on each ship. These ships carry the goods across the north and south Atlantic, and a special fleet of smaller vessels plies between the European ports of Lisbon, Barcelona, Marseille, and, more recently, Toulon. These ships in the aggregate have made hundreds of voyages, and, to the middle of 1944, had moved nearly 300,000 tons of relief goods, sufficient to fill 30,000 European freight cars. These goods represented a value in excess of \$500,000,000.

From the continental ports, the goods are carried by railroad or by truck to Switzerland, where they are stored in warehouses pending distribution to the camps. Prisoner of war supplies are moved free of charge by the European state-owned railroads.

To store such tremendous quantities, it was necessary to create special bonded warehouses in various parts of Switzerland. When I left, we had 14 such warehousing centers which

#### RELIEF DIRECTOR VISITS EUROPE

Mr. Maurice Pate, director of Relief to Prisoners of War at the American Red Cross, returned to the United States in mid-December from a two-month visit to Europe. His journey, which took him to England, France, Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal, was concerned with the movement of prisoner of war supplies to camps and hospitals in Germany. Everything possible is being done to maintain this service on an adequate level.

A report on Mr. Pate's journey will appear in the next issue of PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN.

could store some 75,000 tons at one time.

These various relief goods are dispatched to the camps strictly in accordance with the instructions we receive from the national Red Cross societies for whom we act as trustees. For instance, we have a standing order from the American Red Cross to deliver to every American prisoner of war and civilian internee in Europe one standard food package per week. We ship to the camps whatever supplies we are told to ship, as long as it is not contrary to German camp regulations.

#### Safeguarding Supplies

From the moment relief goods are delivered to a Red Cross ship in Philadelphia until their arrival in a German camp, the International Red Cross assumes responsibility for their safety—subject, of course, to the exigencies of war. At every camp there is a spokesman who acts as representative of all the prisoners of his nationality in that particular camp. According to the Geneva Convention, this spokesman writes or even telegraphs to us in Geneva on Red Cross matters. We thus have direct contact with the spokesmen in the various camps, and I would like to say here that we have not enough praise for these men who look after the welfare of their comrades. We send out to the spokesman order and inventory forms every month. On one side of the form he lists the necessary amount of relief goods the

(Continued on page 11)

## Stalag III B Revisited

you hadn't forgotten us." Here and there on our way through the gray barracks I am hailed with similar words by several students who come up and shake hands. In this hearty atmosphere there are no difficulties in getting the education committee together for a quick survey of the study program. We sit down on benches and Red Cross boxes and form a circle representing all manner of subjects, grades, and universities. With a German officer discreetly in the background, we work through the study program, point by point, and discuss the means of facilitating the work for the class instructors and the individual students. An ever-increasing flow of textbooks is required and it is certainly going to be a hard job satisfying all the requests expressed at this gathering. Although I have to explain carefully the great distances and the manifold obstacles which must be overcome before an American textbook is safely in the hands of a student prisoner, the meeting is closed in an atmosphere of new courage and fresh energy.

#### Results Achieved

It is indeed stimulating to see what results have already been achieved since my previous visit. Then, there was a general atmosphere of depression and apathy; there was just a gray crowd trying to kill endless

hours of doing nothing. And now the handicraft workshop, as well as the theater, where the camp orchestra of 16 instruments gives excellent performances, are humming with life. The camp library is a model of neatness and efficiency. The book-lending system guarantees the most profitable use of the study material received through Geneva from the ESRF, the YMCA, and other organizations. It is a strange feeling to be able to pick a book at random from the shelves and to see the ESRF label inside the cover; to realize that this or that study book has been bought or given by a student in an American university and shipped across the Atlantic to Geneva to be thence dispatched to the prison camp where it now shows every sign of having been thoroughly studied by many student prisoners. All the individual students as well as the class instructors express their deep appreciation of the books received. These turned up as the first tangible evidence of interest and sympathy coming from the outside world, enabling individual students to resume their work, and to set a new goal for their camp activities.

#### Student Solidarity

It is a peculiar privilege to be able to see with one's own eyes how, in the interval between two visits, the whole aspect of the same prison camp can be changed with the help of a little assistance coming from the outside world. It is not less inspiring to have such a striking concrete proof of the fact that student solidarity as expressed by the ESRF and its collaborators throughout the world can alter the whole outlook and mental attitude of lonesome and despairing student prisoners.

These things are not expressed in so many words by the students I meet. But I occasionally feel it in the grip of a hand or see it shining from many keen and ardent faces, and it is this which makes the educational service of the ESRF so very worth-while. I only wish I could pass on a little of that inspiring personal contact from Stalag III B, even if expressed with such simple words as those I heard when I left: "Please hurry back. We'd like to see you real often!"



The American librarian (right) and his assistant at Stalag III B, Fürstenburg/Oder.



## Japanese Camp Report

### Hakodate

Last September a Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross visited the main Hakodate camp, and Kamiso, one of the two Hakodate subcamps. He reported by cable that of the 334 prisoners in the main Hakodate camp 48 were Americans. Among the prisoners at Kamiso there were 5 Americans, and at the other subcamp, Muroran, which he did not visit, 6 Americans were held.

In the main camp prisoners were housed in thirteen one-story wooden buildings with wood floors. Ten of the buildings were new. He stated that electric lighting was provided, that fire-fighting equipment was available, and that there were sufficient dugouts for air raid protection. Each man had five or more thin blankets, one sheet, a pillow, and a mosquito net. Japanese-style hot baths were available every other day, and cold showers at any time.

The Delegate stated that food was identical to that served the camp guards. The daily ration consisted of bread, baked weekly in the camp, rice and other cereals, vegetables, potatoes, a small amount of meat and fish, sugar, green tea, and fruit in season. Eggs and milk were limited to the sick, and no butter, margarine, or cheese was provided. On the day of the Delegate's visit, breakfast consisted of bean soup, potatoes, cabbage, and pumpkins. For lunch, the prisoners received bread, jam, pumpkins and pickles, and for dinner, potatoes and pork soup.

One Japanese medical officer, prisoner doctors assisted by prisoner orderlies, and one dental officer looked after the men's health. There were 20 patients in the infirmary, nine of whom were suffering from amoebic dysentery. In addition, some men not in the infirmary were recovering from beriberi, the Delegate reported. The men's average weight had increased from 132 pounds in 1943 to 138 pounds at the time of the visit. Eleven deaths were reported between August 1943 and September 1944.

At Kamiso, the Delegate found a garden being cultivated and a few pigs and rabbits being raised. The garden produced tomatoes, peppers, beans, eggplant, radishes, and spinach. About two-thirds of the prisoners were working in a nearby cement plant.

Two American army doctors, Captains John Reed Bumgarner and Albert N. Brown, were interviewed by the Delegate in the presence of the camp commander. They said that the protein and fats in the American Red Cross food packages received were important factors in their diet because the camp rations, although providing enough carbohydrates, were deficient in fats and proteins. They said they considered two Red Cross food packages per month per man necessary, although a year ago one package a month would have been sufficient. Drugs and medicines had been received from the Japanese Army, and a large shipment of Red Cross medicine had also arrived and was in use. Several drug items needed were mentioned. They also stated that the prisoners needed new records, playing cards, gloves, boots, soap, and some more blankets.

*(The American Red Cross is fully conscious of the need of prisoners of war in the Far East for supplementary supplies, and constant efforts are being made by all concerned on this side to establish regular shipments. The determining factor, however, is the willingness of the Japanese authorities to cooperate.—Ed.)*

### CHRISTMAS IN THE FAR EAST

Several broadcasts around the middle of December from American prisoners of war held by Japan spoke of the recent distribution of Red Cross boxes, and of the expectation that "we will receive more at Christmas." One broadcast said, "Red Cross parcels recently arrived in camp and we will get them at Christmas."

The broadcasts presumably came from prisoners of war held in Japan proper, and referred to the supplies picked up by the Japanese steamer *Hakusan Maru* at the Soviet port of Nakhodka early in November.

A cable from the International Red Cross Delegate in Japan indicated that approximately 15 percent of the relief supplies brought to Japan from Nakhodka in November would be distributed in the Philippine Islands. This would amount to about 45,000 11-lb. food parcels, besides medical supplies and clothing. The plan provided for similar shipments to Shanghai and North China, and, if possible, some 300 tons for distribution in Malaya, Thailand, and the Netherlands Indies.

### MAIL FROM THE FAR EAST

In the middle of December about 1,500 pieces of mail arrived in the United States from the Far East. This mail was brought on a Soviet steamer across the Pacific from Nakhodka, where the Japanese had picked up supplies for American and Allied prisoners of war and civilian internees.

Most of the mail was dated in September, though one letter bore a date of October 16. The mail came from Hong Kong, Osaka, Hakodate, Tokyo, and Zentsuji. There were cards written September 25 from Zentsuji from several men who had been transferred from the Philippines on September 2. Many prisoners mentioned receipt of mail from the United States.

Although the fairly recent dates on much of this incoming mail is encouraging, it is regrettable that the shipment included none from some of the camps, and nothing from any camp in the Philippine Islands.

### NEW MAP

The February issue of the BULLETIN will contain a new map showing the location of all camps and hospitals in Germany which were known to contain American prisoners of war or civilian internees at the end of 1944. Publication of the new map, which was arranged for the January issue, has been held up for a month in order to get the latest available information from Germany.

All Red Cross chapters will receive, in due course, through area offices, enlargements of the map suitable for wall display.

### HUBER RESIGNS AS PRESIDENT OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

On the attainment of his 70th birthday at the end of 1944, Judge Max Huber resigned as President of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Judge Huber was appointed in 1928, and was the fourth President of the International Committee since its formation in 1863. He will continue to serve the Committee in an advisory capacity.

Mr. C. J. Burckhardt, who has been a member of the Committee since 1933, and has acted as Deputy President since 1942, was appointed to succeed Judge Huber.

## Assistance to Air Forces Next of Kin

In accordance with Article 77 of the Geneva Convention, the American Prisoner of War Information Bureau of the Provost Marshal General's Office is the central agency designated by the American government to disseminate all information concerning American prisoners of war and civilian internees. The Provost Marshal General is charged with the responsibility of maintaining all records and answering all inquiries concerning American nationals in any hands, including members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Merchant Marine, and civilian internees.

To implement and supplement the existing service, there has recently been established, at headquarters, Army Air Forces, a Prisoner of War Section. The primary function of this section is complete liaison with the Provost Marshal General's Office. Since the beginning of hostilities, the Provost Marshal General's Office has maintained close liaison with The Adjutant General's Office of the Army, the Department of State, the Protecting Power (Swiss government) through diplomatic channels, the American Red Cross, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Office of Censorship, and the War Department's Bureau of Public Relations, for the purpose of rendering all aid possible to interned American nationals.

In addition, the Prisoner of War Section of the Army Air Forces is prepared to answer all routine questions from next of kin or interested persons regarding prisoner of war matters. As in the past, however, all questions concerning the internment status of interned American nationals should be directed to the Office of the Provost Marshal General, War Department, Washington 25, D. C., for all information reaching the United States from neutral and enemy sources is channelled to this agency. All possible assistance will be rendered to the next of kin of Air Forces personnel in matters of employment, failure to receive allotment checks, and other kindred situations. In short, the aim of the Prisoner of War Section is to broaden the scope of prisoner of war information to next of kin and other interested persons, and not to cause duplication of effort on the part of any existing agency dealing with

prisoner of war matters. It is felt that such a service will help to ease the minds of the men held prisoners of war as well as their dependents.

It is the sort of undertaking in which the next of kin can be of assistance to the War Department. Recently, a wife wrote for a parcel label by which she could send food and clothing to her husband. The letter which she had received from her husband, and which she forwarded, was the first information the War Department had received concerning him, although he had been a prisoner of the Germans for five months. Furthermore, he wrote in such detail that it was possible to remove the names of nine other men from the rolls of missing in action, and list them as safe and well.

It is not difficult to imagine the relief to the families of those nine men. In this case, the Prisoner of War Section at headquarters, Army Air Forces, routed this communication through the Prisoner of War Information Bureau, Provost Marshal General's Office, which took immediate steps to change the status of these men from missing in action to prisoners of war. The status of many men has been changed from MIA to POW by the sole means of a direct communication from the prisoner,

which information has preceded, some times by weeks, the receipt of official information as released by the Detaining Power through neutral channels.

Families are also urged to notify the Prisoner of War Information Bureau of the Provost Marshal General's Office (or the Personal Affairs Officer of the Prisoner of War Section who may have been in contact with them) whenever they receive a communication from a prisoner of war bearing a camp or hospital address other than the one given to them by the Provost Marshal General's Office. This will assist in keeping the records accurate and current.

### CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM LUFT III

General Vanaman, senior American officer at Stalag Luft III, sent the following message through the Berlin Delegate of the International Red Cross:

*Please pass on to our headquarters in America our Yuletide greetings and say to our families and loved ones that our faith in them, their prayers, and the ultimate peace is unshaken.*

The message, which was sent in the name of all American aviators at Luft III, arrived a few days before Christmas.



Prisoners of war at Stalag 11 B. Sent by Pfc. Dale M. Timmerman, first row on extreme left. No other names furnished.



## Letters

### Far Eastern

Zentsuji

June 6, 1944

(Received at Washington, D. C., Dec. 6)

Dear Mother:

Message No. 12. Have received three of your 25 word letters, latest dated December 14, 1943. Mail coming in frequently now. Happy to read how your birthday was celebrated. My health good. Morale high. Continuing my language study and reading in spite of lazy summer weather.

Camp Hoten, Mukden, Manchuria  
(Undated)

Dear Mom, Dad, and Ali:

I regret very much that we are still apart, but perhaps next year circumstances will be much different. Are you all O. K.? Have there been any changes at home? If so, please let me know. Speaking of changes, I realized a sudden change when I left the tropics and came to Manchuria. The climate in the Philippines was so damp and hot, and here it is the opposite. I have written before that life here isn't so bad. And now, as time passes, more improvements are made. Our camp has a small orchestra, which we like very much. The living quarters, too, have been improved. Well, folks, with these few lines letting you know I am still O. K., I will hope in the near future I will be home.

Zentsuji

April 9, 1944

Dearest Family:

Just found it quite shocking to write the date. Easter today. Missed your Aunt Fannie Mae chocolate egg this morning. Will picture you being at church. Received 106 letters to date. Arrival letters irregular. Letter No. 1 last week. Cannot make out your new permanent address, however, follow you about on map. Know locality. Sounds elegant. Anxious to be with you, and of course "Pop-Overs." Spanish is language being learned. Reading loads. With 500 new Red Cross books have lengthy reading list. Hope to complete before termination of war. Tell that to Jones boys. Mother, Dad, keep Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department, advised of new permanent address. Took out \$10,000 government insurance policy last February. Congratulations to new "Key Man" in family. Must be wonderful to be intellectual. This life has given me no odd illusions—priceless experience and inestimable knowledge derived. I know how to live and will always be happy. They say life begins at forty, and wonder if, with this "Key" to success in living, I have advantage now of 15 years. Honesty, principal requisite, and have my family to thank for that. Besides being a little underweight, my health is fine. Do hope that my family is well, and am looking forward to our reunion.

Taiwan

December 27, 1943

Dear Sister Lee:

Time staggers on, another Christmas just passed into eternity, almost unnoticed in



Group of Americans (names not given) attached to Work Detachment No. 4 at Stalag Luft III B. Picture taken outside the detachment's living quarters.

limbo, except half-hearted attempts at decoration and festivity. God, how I long for feel of snow melting on my face, wholesome sight of snow-covered forest and healthy, honest aroma of polecats. I doubt if you'd recognize me now. Four years have wrought change. No longer thin, scrawny youngster. Almost 150 lbs. now. Of course, have had bouts with disease; malaria, dysentery, pellagra, etc., but O. K. now.

(His normal weight was 185 lbs.—Ed.)

Osaka

(Received August 16, 1944  
in Lowell, Mass.)

Dear Mother:

I am feeling fine and I am working every day, except Sundays, for pay. Time is passing fast, although not quite as fast as I would like to see it. I received your letters sometime ago and to say that I was glad to hear from you and the family is putting it mildly. Well, Mother dear, I think of the family all the time, also of old Terry. [Terry is the family dog.] I want you to get the kitchen all ready for some extra duty, as I am prepared to take on plenty of food.

Well, by the time you receive this I'll be ready for coming home, so until then I'll say God bless you and the family.

### European

Stalag Luft IV

(Undated)

Dear Mom:

How is everyone at home? I am doing fine and am perfectly well. Get plenty of sleep and eats, but a box from home will be nice, so send it, and, above all, write often, because it's very lonesome here. Naturally, we do not have contact with the outside world, and you can imagine how we would welcome a few lines from home letting us know how everyone is.

I was very lucky and I thank God every day and pray for the day when we can all be together again.

My Dearest Darling:

I do hope that this letter reaches you before too long, so that you will not worry too much about me. I am in a hospital with a broken leg and arm. I am under the care of a very good doctor and will be as good as new before long. They treat me very nice here in the hospital, and am getting plenty to eat. I expect to start getting packages from the American Red Cross soon. I will be glad, for they will contain some of my favorite cigarettes. I hope you are getting along fine with your new job. I think of you very often during the long hours I lie here. Darling, please don't worry, and I hope it will not be too long before it is possible for me to rejoin you.

Stalag XVII B

May 15, 1944

Dear Folks:

How are things going back there? Doing pretty well this side of the "pond." We just got thru with another musical show in our Cardboard Playhouse. Our orchestra is 13 pieces now. The name for the theatre comes from the boys having built the inside all of cardboard from Red Cross boxes. It's a nice job. We all have new instruments that came in thru the Red Cross. I've been playing alto-sax for quite awhile.

(The musical instruments referred to above were supplied by War Prisoners Aid of the YMCA, and shipped through the Red Cross.)

Oflag 64

September 3, 1944

Hello, Darling:

Am writing from our new quarters now as you should already know by my earlier card. This is Oflag 64, and a great improvement over previous camps. We have central messing, our own cooks, plates and silverware, American parcels and cigarettes, a big library (with a fine selection) and very nice barracks. The barracks are brick, quite

and divided into cubicles. There are eight men per cubicle and each of us has a large locker. There is a table in the room and eight stools. Each cubicle even has its own window. Hitting here was like striking bonanza. After an uncomfortable ride, we arrived and were greeted with cups of real coffee, heaps of American cigarettes, a good bath, and two new sets of everything from "drawers" on up. You have no idea how we appreciated it. This camp is pretty nice. The only worry I have now is how much longer will it be before I get back to you. I hardly dare think of that.

(This prisoner was previously at Stalag Luft III A, where conditions for newly arrived American prisoners have left much to be desired.)

Stalag Luft III

August 8, 1944

Dear Johnny:

This won't be much of a letter, but it will end of let you know you still have an uncle kicking around somewhere. The picture your mother sent me of you and your first birthday cake aroused much comment, in that you sure have the right idea in going after that cake. My birthday was the other day and the boys here made me a cake. I don't think it was as fluffy as yours. They used an inferior grade of toothpowder, and didn't raise. You can't beat ground-up cardstock, oats, and raisins for a good cake either. There isn't much that goes on here.

Every day that the sun comes out everyone wears shorts and gets out. I am taking a course (no one knows about this except you) in celestial navigation theory. I have written home so many good reasons why I was not taking any courses that now it is too late to do anything about it. I am sure you could write a much better letter than this. Give my love to your Mom and Dad.

Stalag II B

July 7, 1944

(Received October 4 in  
Bainbridge, Ohio)

Dear Mom:

A few more lines to let you know that I'm still O. K. Hope everyone at home is the same. I am still looking for the boys out here on the farm. It's pretty hot here right now. We go swimming almost every evening. I'm getting pretty good with the German language. I can understand and speak it almost fluently. I hope to be going home soon. I don't think it will be much longer. We all hope not.

Stalag VII A

April 17, 1944

(Received August 10  
at Forkland, Ala.)

Dear Mother:

We just had church services in our barracks. There is a British chaplain here who is a prisoner of war too. Lately, several of us have started taking setting up exercises. Being officers, we never have to work, so I get tired of just taking easy all day long. Also I'm learning to play bridge. I've always intended to learn, but just never got around to it. It's really interesting. Last night the British officers here

put on a stage show. It was full of good jokes and acts and we all got a good laugh out of it. Do not worry.

Stalag XVII B

June 28, 1944

Dear Folks:

I had this one letter form left so I thought I'd write again. Things much the same—except we're going to have a big day on the 4th of July. The big event will be the track meet. We have got all the necessary equipment and have built ourselves a track. I'm going to try my luck getting over a bar—and running and standing broad jump. Then in the afternoon all the bands will be playing at the All Star baseball game, and our ring will produce 6 or 7 good prize fights. Then in the evening the awards will be given. It really should be good and a large turnout is expected.

Stalag III B

September 15

American Red Cross,  
National Headquarters,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sirs:

On behalf of all American prisoners of war at Stalag III B, I want to sincerely thank the members of your staff throughout the States, and all of the people back there, for your wholehearted cooperation and

contributions. We know that your undying efforts and full support, both spiritually and materially, have made our life more pleasant here.

I beg to remain, for all Americans in this camp,

Thankfully yours,

(Signed) S/Sgt. Joseph C. Gasperich  
American Man of Confidence

Center Compound

Stalag Luft III

July 4, 1944

My Darling:

Never in my life have I had better reason to celebrate this day. Having lived 38 years in my country and enjoyed, without full appreciation, complete freedom of body and soul, makes me realize, after this year of prison life, the full significance of our favorite national holiday. I now know what truly magnificent courage, faith, and foresight my fellow Virginian, T. Jefferson, and the other signers of the Declaration of Independence had, and this day I pledged myself to face the future with all my courage to help solve the postwar problems we must encounter and thus keep the trust imposed on us by them.

We have had a full day beginning early after roll call with a grand march, track events, baseball games, soccer games, an exhibit of POW arts and crafts, and an outdoor band concert. We had a sort of a holiday, in that we had only one roll call, but we didn't have any fireworks, beer, watermelons (my southern blood), or oratorical contests.

Stalag II B

August 28, 1944

(Received Dec. 9 in  
New York City)

Dear Mom and Dad:

Hello again folks. I hope this letter finds you all in the best of health and in high spirits. Everything here is fine. I am enjoying good health. Besides our ration of food and our Red Cross parcel, we get fresh milk here every day. I'm working on a farm. It's a little strange for me, this farm work, being from the big city, but I'll get used to it. The Red Cross issued us new army clothes, underwear, and toilet articles. Love to all.

(The flow of mail to and from prisoners of war in Germany was greatly hampered for several months following the invasion of France, and particularly because of the closing of the port of Marseilles. Since early November, however, Marseilles has been reopened for the movement of mail, and substantial shipments reached the United States in December, both from Mediterranean and Northern European ports. Military operations inside Germany, however, will no doubt continue to affect the mail service.)

Rhodes General Hospital

Utica, N. Y.

November 24, 1944

The American Red Cross,

Queens County, N. Y.

Dear Friends:

The fact that I am able to write this letter is due, in a large measure, to the efforts of a glorious and unselfish group of people whom I shall never forget as long as I live—The American Red Cross.



From Oflag 64. Left to right, front row, Tom Holt, Cecil Eubanks, Lewis Lowe. Second row, Don Wafal, Bill Hooker. Third row, Art Bryant, Long, Fred Johnson.



Along with a number of my fellow Americans, after being wounded, I was a prisoner of the Germans for about thirty days. During this time the only food we received at their hands was a substitute bread consisting of flour meal and bran, and a very weak soup made from cabbage leaves.

Subsisting on such a diet did keep us alive, but in a very weak condition. Most of us lost about thirty pounds each from our normal weight. After a period of over two weeks of just barely existing, we were delirious with joy to see a number of Red Cross workers who had been allowed in the prison camp area to distribute food packages. I know what these food packages, which seemingly were heaven-sent, must have meant to my buddies, just as they meant to me—a new hope, a new lease on life—that once again we would be able to regain some of our normal strength and vitality.

With thanks from the bottom of my heart, and congratulations for doing such a grand job—a job that I think ranks at the very top of our volunteer war activities, I am,

Sincerely,

WILLIAM C. SULLIVAN.

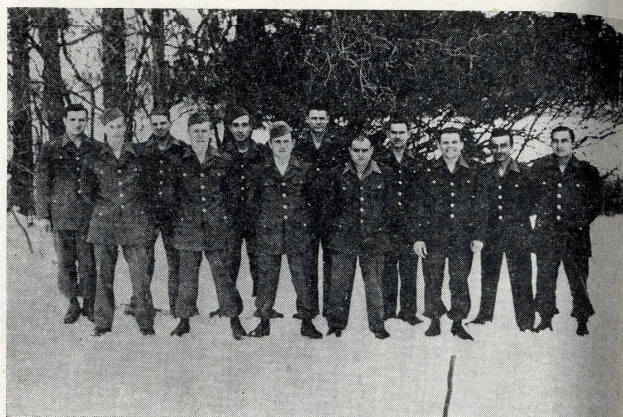
(The above letter was written by a man who had been a prisoner of war in Germany.)

## IDENTIFICATION OF PRISONERS

The frequent publication in the BULLETIN of group pictures of unidentified American prisoners of war ("unidentified" meaning that the sender of a picture did not give the names of the men shown in it) has caused many readers to write to the War Department, as well as to the American Red Cross, claiming to identify men who have appeared in these pictures.

The War Department wishes the relatives of prisoners of war and of men reported missing in action to know that it cannot accept a claim of identification based on a group picture taken in enemy territory. The only official source of prisoner of war information is based upon its release by the enemy through the Protecting Power or the International Committee of the Red Cross, or by direct notification from the prisoner himself.

It has been the experience of the War Department that dozens of people in the United States not infrequently identify the same published picture as that of as many different sons or husbands who have been reported missing in action.



American Work Detachment No. 1549 from Stalag II B. Sent by Pvt. Henry J. Perner, third from right.

## Extracts from Letters

### Far Eastern

A cablegram from a prisoner in Philippine Military Prison Camp No. 3 stated in part: "I am well. You must have received a number of messages from me, as I have never missed a chance to write to you. I have received three letters from Richard and hope he likes his new job, as well as he thought. It seems like all the young people around there are getting married. I received your package. Everything was in good condition."

A colonel, a prisoner at Taiwan, wrote to his wife in Newport, R. I., that he has had no word from home since December 1941. He added, "I am sorry I can't tell you about the sort of life we lead, but it is forbidden." He said he was well, "but plenty tired of this life."

In a broadcast from Java in March 1944, a prisoner told his family in Detroit: "I have received the package that you sent me on the 21st of August 1943. I was very glad to receive it as that is the first time I have heard from you. The articles that you sent me are things that are very useful. The concentrated vitamins are more than appreciated. At the present my health is good. I have been very fortunate here as I have had few tropical sicknesses."

### European

"I have already started to produce 'Kiss and Tell' and will start rehearsing as soon as I get it cast. 'Voice of the Turtle' is quite modern and with its references to rationing and 'Wacs', etc., it made me feel quite away from things and antiquated. I was very anxious to produce it but decided to wait for the Y to send Margaret Sullivan—a kriegie would be a poor substitute. Everything O. K." This was received in New York from a lieutenant in Luft III.

"Hope you are well. I am well. I was taken prisoner on May 31, and am now in a

prisoner of war camp in Bavaria, Germany, after being in several camps in Italy," a prisoner at Stalag VII A wrote to his family in Cleveland in June.

"We saw our first movie here and that was very pleasant entertainment. The picture was 'Orchestra Wives' with Glen Miller. It was quite a treat after so long an absence of a movie," wrote a prisoner at Luft III to his family in New York. The letter was received November 1.

"We ran into a bit of bad luck, but I am pretty sure all of us landed without injury," wrote a prisoner from an unidentified camp in Germany to his family in Buffalo. "I always thought I would be a little bit afraid to jump, but I didn't have to think twice before I went out. The ride down was swell. I landed in a snowbank just as easy as could be," he added.

From Stalag Luft I, dated July 14: "Now, believe it or not, I suddenly decided to have Friday Services, so I organized the other boys and am now conducting services and giving sermons. Odd, I never thought I had it in me. I also spoke to the chaplain here and he is trying to get the books, etc., that we will need for the coming holidays."

In sending the foregoing extract from Brooklyn, N. Y., the prisoner's wife wrote: "We are Jewish, and the letter refers to Jewish religious services. I thought that publishing this letter may alleviate some of the worrying about discrimination against Jewish prisoners."

(It would, of course, be a violation of the Geneva Convention if the German authorities discriminated against prisoners of war on racial or religious grounds.)

"Every one in camp is well and brown as a berry," wrote Col. Delmar T. Soivey from Stalag Luft III. He added, "The tomatoes, onions, radishes, lettuce, etc., from Red Cross seeds were a wonderful supplement to the food packages."

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why is it that we cannot send anything canned in our personal parcels to the boys when Red Cross packages contain canned goods?

For security reasons, the German authorities do not permit sealed cans in next-of-kin parcels to individual prisoners. An exception is made in the case of Red Cross packages which are not addressed to individual prisoners. Red Cross packages go in collective shipments to the camps.

You often publish in the BULLETIN group pictures of "Unidentified American Prisoners of War" in German camps. What does "unidentified" mean?

As a rule, camp pictures published in the BULLETIN are received from prisoners' families. When the man sends a group picture to his family, he sometimes gives, but more frequently does not, the names of the other prisoners in the group. If the names are given and furnished to the BULLETIN, they are published. "Unidentified" simply means that the sender of the picture did not give the men's names.

Are boxes of clothing and provisions given to Allied soldiers as well as to American soldiers?

British Commonwealth prisoners of war in Europe receive, from their respective Red Cross societies, supplies of clothing, food, and comfort articles similar to what American prisoners receive. Norwegian, Belgian, Polish, Greek, Netherlands, French, and Yugoslav prisoners of war receive supplementary supplies mainly through the American Red Cross, but in some cases occasionally from British Commonwealth Red Cross societies. As a rule, the supplies furnished through the American Red Cross to Allied prisoners of war are paid for by the governments or relief organizations directly concerned.

My brother is an AAF noncom at Stalag XVII B in Germany. In the return address on the German letter form, he strikes out Stalag XVII B and writes Stalag Luft III. How should we address our letters to him?

All letter mail for AAF personnel

held by Germany is censored at Stalag Luft III and should be addressed to that camp. If, however, the camp where the prisoner is held is other than Luft III, its designation should be added in brackets. In your brother's case, therefore, letters should be addressed to Stalag Luft III (Stalag XVII B). Next-of-kin parcels, however, must be addressed to Stalag XVII B directly.

Q. How soon should a next of kin hear that a parcel sent to a camp in Germany has been received by the prisoner?

A. Ordinarily, the sender of a parcel does not receive an acknowledgment of it from the prisoner in less than five or six months. Recently, however, a much longer time has elapsed. Conditions in this respect are not likely to improve, but that should not discourage relatives from continuing to send parcels to Americans in German camps.

Q. Do the Germans ever fail to report prisoners?

A. The Geneva Convention requires the Detaining Power to report the capture of enemy personnel promptly to the International Red Cross. Not infrequently in recent months, however, the first word of a man's capture has reached the United States in the form of a card or letter from the man sent direct to his family.

Q. When will I be able to send another parcel to my son in Japan?

A. No means of transportation are at present available for sending private parcels to American nationals held by Japan. In the event the United States government is able to arrange for regular and continuous shipments of relief supplies for American nationals in the Far East, the Japanese government would be expected, on a reciprocal basis, to accept and deliver next-of-kin parcels sent by the same means of transportation to interned American nationals, both military and civilian, in Japanese hands. If facilities for sending parcels again become available, the labels would be issued by the Office of the Provost Marshal General, War Department, Washington, D. C.

Q. My son is a prisoner in Germany and I would like to send him a parcel, but his wife is listed as next of kin and receives the labels. Could I get a special label from the War Department?

A. The Office of the Provost Marshal General issues labels only to next of kin every 60 days. However, other members of the prisoner's family could use the label; or, by arrangement with your daughter-in-law, you could contribute items to her parcel. In such cases, a letter can explain who contributed the various items.

Q. If an American flier is killed in parachuting from his plane, would the Germans report his death?

A. If the body were found in Germany, or in German-occupied territory, and carried sufficient identification, the German government, according to the provisions of the Geneva Convention, would report the death to the International Committee of the Red Cross at Geneva.

Q. If I send fewer letters to my husband, who is a prisoner of war in Germany, is he more likely to get them than if I write frequently?

A. There are no restrictions on the number of letters that may be sent to a prisoner of war in Germany or Japan. In the case of Germany, short, frequent letters (say, about twice a week), written clearly on letter form No. 111, are recommended.

## NONCOMS ON WORK DETACHMENTS

Many American noncoms in German Stalags, especially II B and III B, have complained about being sent out on work detachments. Under the Geneva Convention, noncoms are not required to work, except in a supervisory capacity, though they may volunteer to do so.

The main difficulty appears to be that, upon capture, most noncoms in the line are unable to produce satisfactory proof of their rank, and the German authorities refuse to recognize the noncom status until proof is obtained from the United States. Even though such proof is furnished as promptly as possible, several months must necessarily elapse before it reaches the German authorities.



### Christmas Gifts For German Prisoners

A special group of women volunteers at the Philadelphia Red Cross Packaging Center showed the true Christmas spirit when they packed gifts from the German Red Cross which were shipped from Goteborg, Sweden, on the *Travancore* and the *Saivo* in October for German prisoners of war in the United States. The representatives of the International Red Cross Committee on this side asked for volunteers to pack the *Travancore* gifts, since Swiss volunteers frequently repack bulk gifts for Allied prisoners of war in Germany. The German Red Cross, too, has at times repacked bulk shipments for Allied prisoners.

The Christmas boxes for German prisoners made up from the bulk supplies shipped to Philadelphia on the *Travancore* contained such items as pencils, hair and nail brushes, harmonicas, metal cups, soap dishes, razor blades, spools of cotton and cards of darning wool, bread boards, foot powder, tobacco pouches, small leather money bags with a drawstring attached, and notebooks. These supplies shipped by the German Red Cross on the *Travancore* were sufficient to make up gift parcels for about 250,000 prisoners.

The *Saivo* shipment of about 4,000 cases included cigars, German Red Cross calendars, raisin bread, canned fruit, tomato soup, and toilet articles. These cases went direct from Philadelphia to the camps for German prisoners, no repacking being necessary.

### NEXT-OF-KIN PARCELS

A recent visit to the Office of Censorship revealed that such items as coffee, tea, seasonings, rice, and tooth powder sent in cardboard containers in next-of-kin parcels, are frequently damaged in transit to New York. When the containers break, the contents are spoiled and, in turn, spoil other items in the parcel.

It is advisable to wrap separately in brown paper items of the above character in a next-of-kin parcel. Many next of kin, before wrapping a package of coffee or tooth powder in brown paper, first wrap it in the wax paper that usually goes with a loaf of bread. Besides affording some packing protection, this wax paper helps to seal in the odor and flavor of the item sent in the container.

### REQUEST FOR LETTERS AND PICTURES

The prisoners' letters and camp pictures published in the *BULLETIN* are obtained mainly from the men's families. Since letters and pictures from the camps have wide public interest, and especially for relatives who have not yet begun to receive mail direct, readers are urged to continue sending copies of the letters and pictures they receive to PRISONERS OF WAR *BULLETIN*, American Red Cross, Washington 13, D. C. If originals are sent, they will be returned as soon as copies have been made for the *BULLETIN*.

Even though it is not always possible to publish all the letters and pictures that are sent in, they are carefully read for any helpful information or suggestions they may contain.

### Christmas Parcels For Swiss Internees

Red Cross Christmas parcels, the contents of which were listed in the December *BULLETIN*, were delivered to all American military internees in Switzerland. These military internees are mainly fliers whose planes through accidents have been obliged to land on Swiss soil.

In view of the fact that military internees receive, from the Swiss authorities, the same rations as Swiss citizens, and moreover enjoy the same right as Swiss citizens to purchase

### "KRIEGIE LIFE" AT STALAG LUFT I

A copy of *Kriegie Life*, the Stalag Luft I camp monthly, issued at Barth is the latest American prisoner of war publication to reach this country from Germany. An editorial apology states that, "Any resemblance of *Life* to a magazine is purely accidental. The following Air Forces officer produced by pen and typewriter the 24 pages which made up the March 1944 issue of *Kriegie Life*:

#### Editors:

2nd Lt. E. T. Fleischauer  
2nd Lt. M. M. Schoenborn

#### Staff:

2nd Lt. L. J. Celusmak  
2nd Lt. J. P. Crowley  
2nd Lt. E. Shorb

#### Art:

2nd Lt. J. V. Matthews  
2nd Lt. E. P. Winslow

#### Sports:

1st Lt. H. C. DeLury

#### Typist:

2nd Lt. J. P. McLeod

#### Kibitzer:

2nd Lt. R. N. Dahly

#### Moral Supporter:

Major W. P. Todd

*Kriegie Life* is very similar in style and makeup to *Barbs and Gripes*, thus we are able to keep track of all Stalag II B newsheet which was reviewed in the October 1944 issue of PRISONERS OF WAR *BULLETIN*.

unrationed goods, the authorities do not consider it necessary for supplementary Red Cross supplies to be distributed to military internees. However, an exception was made for the Christmas parcel.



prisoner of war food packages stored in one of the International Red Cross Committee's 14 warehouses in Switzerland.

### MOVING SUPPLIES TO PRISON CAMPS

(Continued from page 2)

camp will require for the following month, and, on the other side, an inventory of the goods still on hand. We are able to keep track of all goods, which, of course, we must report for by monthly report to the donors—that is, to the national Red Cross societies. A further control of supplies is performed by International Red Cross delegates who visit the camps at intervals, and who make a checkup with the spokesmen distributed to military internees. We have 45 delegations and over 100 delegates established in the five continents of the world. Up to the present, we have been able to telephone from Geneva to our delegation in Berlin on all matters concerning camp supplies.

### Relief to the Far East

It is unfortunate that no International Committee delegates have yet been able to return from the Far East to report in person on camp conditions there. All we know on this subject has come by cable or written reports which have had to pass through Japanese censorship. We have all tried our utmost, and are still trying, to establish means of regular transport so that a steady stream of goods could get through all Far Eastern camps. The only goods which had actually reached the prison camps in the Far East up to

the time I left Geneva were transported on diplomatic exchange ships. Their number, unfortunately, was few. Still, some food packages, clothing, medical and other supplies have been sent through this channel, and just lately a full cargo of relief goods left a Russian eastern port and reached the Japanese mainland. Besides that, large sums of money have been transferred to the International Red Cross delegates in the Far East to purchase relief goods locally for distribution among prisoners of war and civilian internees. It is earnestly to be hoped that our constant efforts to aid prisoners held by Japan will meet with greater success than has been the case up to the present.

### Latest Developments in Germany

Since I left Geneva on October 18, many things have happened. Up to the time I left, relief distributions to camps in Germany could still be maintained at a certain level, and the German authorities permitted large reserves of food packages to be held at most of the camps. But it is evident from the latest cable reports that transportation difficulties are increasing, and that we must expect occasional setbacks in distribution, which will become more serious with the growing reluctance of German authorities, for security reasons, to permit food reserves inside camps. Constant hammering on the ground and from the air has become so devastating that the railroad system

### PHILIPPINES' SURVIVORS

Most of the 83 American survivors from the torpedoing of a Japanese freighter off Mindanao on September 7 reached the United States in November. The freighter was transporting 750 American prisoners of war, veterans of Bataan, from Camp No. 2 at Davao to the north—presumably to Manila. The fate of the remaining 667 prisoners, a War Department announcement stated, was unknown.

The 83 survivors comprised 79 army and 4 navy personnel. Two of the survivors chose to stay in the Philippines. Since their return to the United States, many of the men have been decorated for their indomitable courage and resourcefulness in successfully evacuating the group, which included seriously wounded prisoners, to American control.

Representatives of the American Red Cross have interviewed several of the survivors. They confirmed the receipt of the relief supplies which the Red Cross had already been informed were distributed in the Philippines in 1943. The men also said that, early in March 1944, distribution began of the supplies shipped some months earlier on the *Gripsholm*. From the last *Gripsholm* shipment each man in Camp No. 2 at Davao received four 13-lb. food packages, but the last was not delivered until August 1944. They said the choice and packing of the food parcels were good. Medical supplies, shoes, and comfort articles were also distributed. No personal parcels were received by the men in this camp, but the Red Cross supplies which reached the camp, one officer stated, meant the difference between life and death.

is going from bad to worse, and we may soon begin to lack means of transport. Steps have recently been taken to organize transport by road from continental ports to Switzerland, using trucks supplied by the American and Canadian Red Cross societies, to supplement continental rail transport. All these matters are receiving continuous and careful study, with the closest cooperation of the American and British Commonwealth Red Cross societies, as well as of their governments.



American prisoners at Stalag II B. Sent by Pvt. Frank S. Valella. No other names given.



## Expediting Mail

The War Department announced on December 18 that transmission of letter mail to and from American prisoners of war in Germany and Japan will be expedited as a result of the cooperative assistance rendered the American government in this regard by the governments of Sweden, Switzerland, and the Soviet Union.

In the case of American prisoners of war in Germany, arrangements have been completed with the Swedish and Swiss governments whereby prisoner of war mail destined for American soldiers in German prison camps will be dispatched by air on alternate routes via Sweden and Switzerland. This two-way shuttle service over these two alternate routes will considerably reduce the transit time for these mails, which will be dispatched from the United States to Europe direct by air on a daily schedule.

A portion of the prisoner of war mail addressed to American prisoners in Japan will, effective at once, be carried on Soviet ships leaving west coast ports, as a result of instructions issued to Soviet ship captains by the Soviet government advising them to accept prisoner of war mail from American postal authorities for dispatch to American prisoners of war held by Japan. This mail will be transported across the Pacific to Soviet ports, and thereafter transferred to the Japanese for delivery to prisoner of war camps. This service supplements that already in effect whereby prisoner of war mail to Japan is transported by air to Iran, and transhipped from that country to Japan.

No postage is necessary on the foregoing mail.

## Record Shipment Leaves Philadelphia

The M/S *Saivo*, the latest Swedish vessel to enter the service of the International Red Cross, left Philadelphia on December 2 with a record cargo of food, clothing, athletic equipment, and other supplies from the American and Canadian Red Cross societies for prisoners in Germany. The supplies shipped amounted to nearly 6,000 tons, and included over 650,000 American Red Cross standard food packages, and a large consignment of clothing for French prisoners.

This was the *Saivo's* second trip across the Atlantic. On her maiden voyage in October she brought Christmas gifts from the German Red Cross for German prisoners of war in Canada and the United States.

The outgoing cargo from Philadelphia was discharged at Goteborg, Sweden, whence arrangements were made to transship it to Lübeck, the north German port. International Red Cross Delegates take charge of the relief supplies at Lübeck and handle their distribution to the camps in Germany.

### TWENTY-MILLIONTH PACKAGE

On December 7, the anniversary of Pearl Harbor, the twenty-millionth prisoner of war package came off the assembly line at one of the Red Cross Packaging Centers in Philadelphia, New York City, St. Louis, or Brooklyn, N. Y. Packaging Center operations began early in 1943. All four assembly lines are operated by women volunteers.

### ADDRESSING NEWLY CAPTURED PRISONERS

The November 1944 issue of the BULLETIN reported that mail for newly reported prisoners of war in Germany could be addressed in care of the International Red Cross Directory Service at Geneva, Switzerland, pending receipt of the prisoner's permanent camp address.

At the time of the announcement, it was decided that the prisoner's serial number should not be made part of the address. In the meantime, however, the International Red Cross has advised that the inclusion of the serial number would aid identification and not cause confusion with the POW number when the latter is reported to Geneva by the German authorities. The serial number may therefore be included after the prisoner's name and rank, but it should be clearly indicated as the serial number, and its use discontinued as soon as the POW number becomes available.

rapidly changing military picture of summer and fall brought numerous new prisoners in the prisoner of war relief work. To coordinate the work at various points, our director, Mr. Pate, left here in mid-October. During 60 days he travelled 14,000 miles by plane and car. He visited London, was twice in Paris, three times in our southern entry ports of Marseilles and Toulon, twice (for a total of three times) in Switzerland. Then, on the return trip, he stopped in Barcelona and Lisbon, up to now have been two or our intermediate ports.—Editor.

This is an informal report on my trip to Europe to each of the 100 families of American prisoners of war, and an expression of certain aims which the American Red Cross is endeavoring to fulfill.

The August 1944 wave of optimism was not shared by the American Red Cross. At that time we in the Prisoners of War decided to prepare for at least another year of operations in Europe. If the same earlier, we could only be prepared. With a substantial capital from Red Cross funds, a packaging center was opened in Brooklyn early in September 1944. The plant has already turned out over one million standard food packages for prisoners of war.

Added Americans repatriated on the *Gripsholm* last September were fully interviewed by Red Cross representatives in order to find out means of better serving American prisoners in Europe during 1945.

Cooperation Between Governments  
The Allied invasion of France brought great changes in our war prisoner relief operation. At any time delivery of a single parcel to a prisoner in Europe is not as easy as it may seem to the parents and other relatives on this side. The war requires the active and helpful cooperation of many governments of our own government.



# PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN

Published by the American National Red Cross for the Relatives of American Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees

NO. 2

WASHINGTON, D. C.

FEBRUARY 1945

## A Report to Relatives of Prisoners

By Maurice Pate

All kinds of arrangements, with the support of our government, have to be worked out involving London, Geneva, Berlin, Stockholm, and even Moscow, because sailings of neutral ships now entering the Baltic Sea on their relief missions must be notified to all Powers concerned with that area in order that these ships may proceed without interference.

### The Northern Route

Few Americans perhaps realize that the main life line for food to their prisoner kin in Germany is now through Sweden. Back of this is a sequence of events.

A year ago the American Red Cross, backed by the United States government and military authorities, sent large reserves of supplies via Marseilles to Switzerland. That is why, though Switzerland was cut off from France for five months last summer and fall, we were able to serve the camps in Germany out of reserves accumulated in Switzerland during the previous winter and spring.

But two roads of relief are always better than one. Therefore, with the aid of both Swiss and Swedes, we started planning as far back as June 1944 the new path via Goteborg, Sweden, and north German ports to the camps in Germany. This has borne results. So far we have shipped 40,000 tons of war prisoner relief supplies to Goteborg. Up to February 1945, nearly 3,000,000 standard food packages shipped on from Goteborg have reached American and Allied camps in Germany.

The Baltic Sea between Goteborg and Lübeck, Germany, is sown with anchored mines. So, when goods are sent over this route, both we and the Swedish shipowners who provide the

vessels are running constant risks. Twenty voyages by Swedish ships have so far been safely made between Goteborg and Lübeck, though any day we know a ship may strike a mine. German minesweepers cleared a path for our Swedish relief ships to Germany, and, at Lübeck, German freight cars steadily move the food packages to the camps.

### The French Ports

It is difficult to visualize the degree of destruction I found both in Marseilles and Toulon, the main French ports on the Mediterranean. What Allied aviators had not done in destroying the ports while the Germans were still there, the Germans did at the time of their withdrawal. Then the Americans and French performed a miracle in quickly getting these ports into usable condition.

As there was at the time (in November) a great military movement through Marseilles, it was decided to make use of Toulon, about 40 miles away, as the main port of entry for Red Cross prisoner of war supplies on the southern route. Allied military authorities have given us unstinted cooperation in handling shipments through Toulon, and the heavy-duty trucks which were shipped by the American and Canadian Red Cross societies last summer have proved invaluable in getting the goods from shipside to the nearest railroad. With the help of army engineers, it was a matter of only a few hours to lift the trucks ashore and get them rolling. French workers unload supplies from Red Cross ships at Toulon.

For several months, therefore, prisoner of war shipments (British as well as American) have been moving simultaneously from Toulon and

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